

REMARKS

This response is being filed concurrently with an RCE.

Claims 3, 6-10, 12-13, 16, and 19-27 were pending. Claims 3, 6-10, 12-13, 16, and 19-27 were rejected. Claims 3, 12, 16, 21, 22, 24, 25, and 27 have been amended. Claims 3, 6-10, 12-13, 16, and 19-27 are currently pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The examiner has rejected claims 3, 6, 7, 9, 12, 16, and 19-27 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,910,599 issued to Seiji HASHIMOTO (hereinafter Hashimoto).

Hashimoto discloses an imaging system with high and low speed readout (Hashimoto, Title). A portion B of the image formed on the imaging device is displayed at a greater scale (Hashimoto, column 3, line 67 to column 4, line 1). Signals corresponding to unnecessary portions including the optically black portion are shifted at a high speed (Hashimoto, column 4, lines 5-8). The shifting of some of the unnecessary portion takes place at a frequency $2f_s$ (Hashimoto, column 8, lines 41-48). The shifting of one of the optically black portions takes place at a frequency f_s (Hashimoto, column 8, lines 61-65). The zoomed in portion B is shifted at a frequency $f_s/2$ (Hashimoto, column 9, lines 11-20). The optically black portion is shifted at a lower frequency than the unnecessary portion so that the optically black portion may be read accurately, such that the optically black level may be set accurately (Hashimoto, column 9, lines 30-33). The signals corresponding to the optical black portion are used to correct the dark current level (Hashimoto, column 13, lines 8-12).

On page 3 of the examiner's rejection the examiner indicated that the dummy pixel was interpreted as a pixel from the unnecessary region and that the non-reading pixel as a pixel from the optical black region. The examiner also stated that "the claim does not require nor does the specification explicitly define the dummy pixel region that is optically black or light-shielded." In response to the examiner's comments, the applicant has amended claim 3 to recite that the dummy pixel is light-shielded. Support for this amendment may be found on page 10, lines 18-19 of the applicant's specification.

Claim 3 as currently amended, recites that the dummy pixel is light-shielded and is thus functionally equivalent to the optical black region as used in Hashimoto. The light-shielded dummy pixel is transferred at a frequency that is higher than the non-reading pixel. All the embodiments disclosed by Hashimoto indicate that the optically black region is transferred at a frequency that is lower than the non-reading pixel. Thus, Hashimoto teaches away from claim 3 as currently recited. Claim 3 is allowable at least because it is patentably distinguishable from the prior art.

Claims 12, 16, 21, 22, 24, 25, and 27 have been amended in substantially the same manner as claim 3 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Claims 6, 7, 9, 19, 20, 23, and 26 are allowable at least because they are dependent upon allowable base claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) over Hashimoto and U.S. Patent No. 6,100,928 issued to Daisuke HATA. Claim 10 was rejected under 35 USC § 103 over Hashimoto and U.S. Patent No. 5,191,426 issued to Nobuo KOCHI. Claim 13 was rejected under 35 USC § 103 over Hashimoto and U.S. Patent No. 5,684,609 issued to Marin POTUCEK et al.

Claims 8, 10, and 13 are allowable at least because they are dependent upon allowable base claims.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of the present application. If there are any remaining issues, the examiner is encouraged to contact the applicants' undersigned agent to discuss said issues.

Respectfully submitted,

/Daniel A. Ratoff/

Daniel A. Ratoff
Registration No. 54,389

Please address all correspondence to:

Epson Research and Development, Inc.
Intellectual Property Department
2580 Orchard Parkway, Suite 225
San Jose, CA 95131
Phone: (408) 952-6030
Facsimile: (408) 954-9058
Customer No. 20178

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